

Ascension(rewritten)

by Strikedonia

Category: Frozen

Genre: Horror, Mystery

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-14 00:06:02

Updated: 2016-04-21 21:21:04

Packaged: 2016-04-27 18:30:18

Rating: T

Chapters: 2

Words: 6,278

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Despite all they've been through, despite all the pain she's put her sister through, Elsa hopes to reconnect with Anna. But amidst her attempts to make up for everything she's done, strange things begin to happen, incidents that are beyond her understanding. Something moves in the shadows, hunting her, and Elsa must find out what it is before it destroys everything she holds dear.

1. Chapter 1

Elsa ran. Her hair whipped back and forth in the strong winds that drove past her. Snow churned around her in angry swarms, writhing and twisting, the sharp crystals cutting her cheeks like white-hot knives being driven into her flesh. Her arms flailed wildly as she struggled to ward off their vicious assault, to escape from the destruction that was happening around her.

_The wind howled like the wailing of wolves as they cried to the night sky, ceaseless and never-ending. Its icy claws tore the shingle from houses and cast them into the darkened sky. Debris showered around her feet as she ran, pelting the cobblestone street like bullets and cutting into the soft flesh of her ankles. Still, she pressed on, ignoring the pain and the blood dripping down her legs, leaving splattered red marks on the stone where she walked.

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_Desperately, she looked for a way to escape, but she could see nothing through the blinding white snow that swirled around her. There was nothing but white, nothing outside of this world she had created. Even the earth beneath her feet had turned to ice, the pale blue contrasting sharply against the crimson blood that spilled down her legs and pooled onto its surface. _

_She felt empty, hollow. There was nothing here for her, yet she felt in her heart that she had to press on. But what was the point? What reason did she have to live? Wouldn't it be better to just let it all go, for all the pain and fear she had run from her whole life to

justâ€|take her? She stopped running, and slid to her knees in the deepening snow with her head bowed. What did she have left that was worth fighting for? _

It was then that she heard a faint sound carry to her on the howling winds. The sound rose and fell with the wailing of the storm, barely noticeable and impossible to make out, but it was there. With every moment that passed, the sound grew louder, as though whatever made it was coming closer, fighting its way through the raging storm to reach her.

_Slowly, Elsa stood, and began to struggle through the churning snow towards where she guessed the sound was coming from. After a few moments, she caught sight of a dark shape through the blinding white, a silhouette of a young woman struggling through the raging storm. She could hear their cries being carried towards her on the howling wind. Her blood turned to ice in her veins when she recognized the voice calling out to her, and she ran towards the distant figure, now desperate to reach them. _

"_Anna!" _

_Elsa struggled towards her sister, calling out to her, but her voice was lost to the shrieking winds. _

"_Hold on Anna! I'm coming!" _

_Fighting through the storm, she found her sister shivering with her hands pressed against her chest in a feeble attempt to keep them warm. And she was struggling, struggling to remain upright. Her feet wobbled unsteadily beneath her as she staggered towards Elsa. Every step that she took appeared to cause her great pain, yet she continued to push herself forward. They were mere yards away, yet to Elsa it seemed as though they were miles apart. _

Time seemed to pass in slow motion once she got a good look at her sister. Her hair, once a beautiful strawberry blonde, had now turned as white as the snow swirling around her, and her skin was slowly turning to ice. Frost spiraled from the tips of her fingers and bled into her hands, the ice slowly devouring her skin. Her sister seemed to teeter for a moment, her hand reaching out as though to touch her.

"_Elsaâ€|" _

_It was the last word her sister spoke. In an instant, a stain of ice had appeared over her heart and quickly spread, bleeding onto her neck and shoulders, consuming her, leaving her as nothing more than a glistening figurine. Her frozen arm was stretched out before her, her final act of desperation frozen in the ice. _

_Elsa screamed, a wailing cry of raw grief as her mind shattered into a thousand pieces. Staggering forward, she fell to the ground at her sister's feet, tears flowing freely from her eyes as she struggled to her feet. Slowly, her hands found their way to her sister's cheeks.

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"_Noâ€|no, please noâ€|" _

_Her sister's eyes stared blankly back at her, devoid of thought or

emotion. Only the fear remained, her sister's final moment of terror forever petrified on her face. She clutched her sister's body, tears streaming down her face and leaving trails of ice as they froze on her cheeks. _

_Suddenly, she heard a faint sound behind her, the soft crack of ice as it was stepped on. _

"_Look at what you've done, Elsa" _

_Elsa whirled around, and was confronted by Hans. He clutched tightly at the sword in his hand, its sharpened tip aimed at her heart as he pointed it towards her accusingly. _

"_Your sister is deadâ€|because of you!" he spat vehemently, stalking towards her, "All of this is because of you!" _

"_Noâ€|no, this isn't my fault!" Elsa pleaded, "I didn't mean for any of this to happenâ€|" _

"_It's too late for that." he murmured, his voice suddenly soft and devoid of any emotion, yet his eyes shone with ruthless ambition, "You are guilty of murder and treason, and I hereby sentence you to death for your crimes against Arendelle." _

_The sword came plunging down. Elsa feebly held her arms over her head in a vain attempt to protect herself. She screamed, _and with a jolt woke up still screaming. The swirling snow and bitter wind vanished, and was replaced by soft, warm blankets and low burning candles. She was in her bed, safe and sound back in her own room, miles from where she had been mere moments ago.

Outside her window, the city was slumbering, a glimmer of light creeping over the horizon signaling the approaching dawn. But despite the reassuring sight of the peacefully sleeping city, Elsa could not shake the fear that had haunted her throughout her life. Even that same dream had plagued her for many nights now, steadily becoming worse until she had come to dread the usually warm, welcoming arms of sleep.

Pushing back the sheets, she sat up. The silk nightgown she wore was soaked with sweat, and stuck tightly to her skin. Climbing out of bed, she slipped the thin gown over her head, shivering slight as the cool morning air that was wafting gently through the open window struck her bare skin. A small pewter pitcher of water rested on the dresser by her bedside, and she poured some of its contents into the washbasin beside it.

Cupping her hands together, she dipped them into the bowl, letting some of the cold water trickle between her fingers before splashing it on her face, gasping as it trickled down her bare chest. Slowly, she began to wash herself, dipping her hand in the cold water and rinsing over her smooth skin to clear away the cold sweat sticking to her body before finding a towel to dry herself with.

Once that was done, she sat on the edge of the bed, wrapping her arms loosely around her shoulders and staring at the opposite wall. Behind her, the sun began to emerge from behind the jagged peaks of the Fjord, its warm light flooding through her window and dancing across the walls. She could hear the sound of birds chirping outside her

window, their beautiful song heralding the start of another day.

But their song was lost on Elsa. She was too deep in thought to even take notice. She sat in silent contemplation, dwelling on everything that had happened in the month since her coronation, and the terrible winter that followed after. Even now, doubt continued to gnaw at her. Fears that such a horror could happen again, and that this time it would be beyond her power to control, haunted her every waking moment.

She knew that love was the key to taming her powers, that it was what had given her the strength necessary to undue her curse, but love was a difficult thing to comprehend. It was a swell of conflicting emotions that rose and fell like the waves that crashed against the seashore. There was the apex, and then there was the trough. Every good feeling was inevitably tied to a bad one, every fond memory an unpleasant one. Whenever she thought of her sister, and how much she loved her, she evoked memories that she had long since tried to bury, and then the fear would return.

She was shaken from her thoughts by a light knock on her door, and she briefly wondered who it could be. It was just after dawn, much earlier than Kai, the castle steward, would ordinarily wake her, and the soft tapping did not sound urgent. Indeed, the sound was familiar, one that she had heard a thousand times before.

"Who is it?" She called out softly, though she felt she already knew who it was. There was a moment's pause before a quiet voice answered back.

"It's me."

Elsa quickly stood, nearly tripping in her haste to answer the door, before stopping herself when she remembered she had nothing on. Quickly, she glanced around for something she could slip on and, for a moment, her eyes fell on the discarded gown lying on the floor. She wrinkled her nose in disgust at the thought of putting the sweat soaked garment on, and instead an idea flew into her head.

Raising her hand over her head, she twirled it, and the room was momentarily bathed in light as a dress made from a light blue material formed over her body, perfectly fitting around her slender form and leaving her shoulders and arms bare. Its front was adorned in glittering ice crystals that glittered in the warm sunlight. For a moment, she was struck with wonder at the beauty her magic could create. It was something she never really had to think about. She just did what her heart told her to do, and it never ceased to amaze her.

Then she remembered the door and quickly walked to it, turning the curved brass handle and pulling it open to find her sister standing just on the other side. Her hand was raised as she prepared to knock again.

"Anna!" she sighed, "What are you doing up this early?"

Anna slowly lowered her hand and began playing with a lock of her hair nervously. "I!" she began hesitantly, "I heard you screaming."

Elsa sighed and turned away from her sister, slowly walking back to her bed and sitting down on its edge. Anna stepped into the room and quietly closed the door behind her before walking over to sit beside her sister.

"Same dream?"

Elsa closed her eyes and nodded. All the pain she felt watching her sister die in front of her came flooding back, the guilt overwhelming her. She knew that it was just a dream, that it couldn't hurt her, but she could not shake the fear. It was a dream, but just a month before it had come so close to becoming reality. Her sister could have died, and it would have been because of her. She would have been condemned of murder, executed for her crimes, and that treacherous snake Hans would have been crowned king in her place. Her people would have only remembered her as a monster, a witch, and her sister as the brave young princess that died trying to stop her.

Anna wrapped her arms around her sister comfortingly, letting her lean into her and rest her head on her shoulder. "It's alright, Elsa." she reassured, bring her hand up to stroke her sister's platinum blonde hair, "You can control it now. I know you can."

Elsa's eyes opened, and she stared at her sister. She had said something along those lines before, mere moments before a sliver of ice pierced her heart. It was a moment that would be forever engraved in her memory, one that she would rather forget. The sight of her sister kneeling in pain, her hands clutching at her chest as though trying to reach her heart, it had destroyed her. Everything she had done, the thirteen years she had spent locked away, all to protect her sister, and it had all been for naught.

Could she trust herself? Could she really keep her powers under her control? She had believed that once before, believed that she could contain them without hurting anyone else, and it was in that moment of arrogance that she unknowingly unleashed eternal winter upon her kingdom. For twenty years she had struggled with the power she was born with, the gift that was both a blessing and a curse, and still it was beyond her ability to control.

Still, she knew she had to try, or else her fear would control her for the rest of her life. This time, she wasn't alone. She knew Anna was there for her, that her sister would stand beside her no matter what happened. It was often said when something is broken it comes back stronger than ever. Nothing truer could be said of her and Anna, because when all was said and done, the bond of love between them was stronger than it had ever been before.

Even so, there was distance between them. They had spent so many years apart, Elsa felt as though she barely knew her sister, that she was a stranger to her. She was a far cry from the little girl she once knew and loved, as was she. There was still so much for her to make up for, so many years of hurt that she needed to heal.

"I-I'm so sorry, Anna."

Anna started and looked down at her sister in surprise. "For what?"

"Everything." she whispered, "I hurt you. I shut you out when should have let you in."

She hung her head in shame.

"I should have been there for you when mom and dad died. It would have been better for both of us if I hadn't stayed away. I justâ€¦I was so scared of hurting you."

"Oh, Elsaâ€¦" Anna cooed softly, "It wouldn't have changed anything if you had."

She shook her head.

"Iâ€¦I don't think we should talk about this. Not right now, at least. Let's talk about something else, something that will cheer you up, get your brooding mind off everything bad that's happened."

Elsa stared at her sister blankly, confusion written in her eyes. She often was when her sister abruptly changed subjects like that. "Waitâ€¦what? What are you talking about?"

Anna sighed and rolled her eyes. "Don't tell me you've forgotten already!" she cried, pretending to pout. "Don't you remember what today is?"

Elsa looked at her sister blankly for several moments, racking her brains trying to figure out what she could have possibly forgotten about until at last she remembered.

"Oh! It's your birthday today!" she cried, mentally scolding herself for forgetting her own sister's birthday. She had been planning this for weeks, working herself to near exhaustion the last few days to keep everything a secret from Anna, and today was the day.

Instantly, her entire demeanor changed, and she beamed excitedly. Quickly, she stood and took Anna by the hand, pulling her giggling sister to her feet. "And it's going to be perfect."

Smiling, she slyly walked to a tall wardrobe in the corner and opened the door closest to her so Anna couldn't see what was inside. Still smiling, she pulled out a dress wrapped in a white cloth covering. "Let's start with this." She beamed, holding it out to her.

Anna gasped when she realized it was a present for her and eagerly took it, pulling off the cloth cover. A beautiful dress with a black bodice and teal skirt slipped out. The bodice was embossed with crimson and dark green prints with chartreuse linings, the skirt with yellow and olive sunflower prints around the hem. An apple-green, sleeveless, cropped gilet with teal and dark green rosemaling patterns on the front and back matched the stunning gown.

Tears came to Anna's eyes as she looked down at the dress her sister had given her. It was the first real birthday present Elsa had ever given her, the first in the many years they had been separated, and she felt completely overwhelmed with joy. Dropping the gown, she flung herself into Elsa and hugged her, burying her face into her sister's shoulder.

"Oh Elsa, it's beautiful!" she cried, "Thank you."

Elsa chuckled and hugged Anna close, her hand running through the tangled mess that was her sister's hair. As she did, her eyes fell on the lock that, not long before, had been white as snow. Now, with the thawing of her sister's frozen heart, it had returned to its true color. The memory still haunted her some nights, the moment her sister's hair had turned snow white, her skin as cold as ice. But now, seeing her sister safe and happy, happier than she had seen her in so many years, it brought her peace. Something she had not had in a long time.

"Anything for you..." She whispered, gently pulling away and placing her hand against her sister's cheek. "Come on. We'd better get that ridiculous hair of yours under control and get you ready for your party."

Taking her hand, she began to pull her sister out of her room and into the hall. Anna giggled as her sister dragged her back to her room, suddenly eager to see what else her sister had planned for her.

* * *

><p>As I'm sure you've all figured out from the title, this is a rewritten version of my other fic, Ascension. I wasn't all that happy with the story, so I'm going to put it on hold for a while and focus my attention on this one. This story is going to be similar to Ascension, but with a lot of major changes to the plot and characters. **

Also, for some the younger readers out there, the story is still rated T like the original, but is going to take on a much, MUCH harsher tone. The beginning is going to be very light-hearted the first few chapters, but then things are going to get a lot darker, and more than a little frightening.

I**'m only going to write the first few chapters and publish them. If people like this story better, I'll delete
Ascension**** and focus all my attention on this one. If not, I'll just scrap it and finish the original.**

Wish me luck!

2. Chapter 2

For those of you who haven't read the original, this story takes place about a month after the events of the movie, in the beginning of September.

"Okay okay, here we go! "

Elsa waved her hand and a small ice figurine of her sister materialized. A large, lavishly decorated ice-cream cake that had been specially made by Arendelle's finest baker for her sister's party sat on a small wooden table in front of her. Four tiered, dressed in creamy blue icing and decorated with sunflowers, it was a work of art. Now, she was trying to put on the last finishing touch, but no matter how many times she tried, she couldn't seem to get it

just right.

"So lonelyâ€¦" she murmured. She twirled her hand over the figurine and it vanished, replaced by one of her and Anna standing beside one another. She pressed her lips together in a thin scowl as she stared at the awkward distance between the two figures.

"Stiff." She grumbled, waving her hand irritably. This time, the ornament transformed into an image that seemed plucked straight from her dream, of her clinging to her sister's frozen body. Elsa's eyes widened and she gasped.

"Can't do that!"

Quickly, she waved her hand and the figurine changed to one of her and Anna skating together, arms spread wide as they glided alongside on another joyfully.

Elsa took a deep breath and closed her eyes, banishing the memories that began to surface.

"Come on, Elsa, this is for Anna, you can do this."

Satisfied that the cake was perfect, she turned away and began to inspect the rest of the castle courtyard. Several dozen round tables were set up in rows, each covered with a clean white tablecloth and decorated with a vase of freshly picked wildflowers. Long tables sat to the side, their surfaces covered with an assortment of food and refreshments, and many embroidered banners hung from the walls around the edges of the courtyard, gently fluttering in the cool autumn breeze.

The sun shone brightly overhead as she walked amongst the tables, straightening the tablecloths or rearranging the plates and silverware as she saw fit. Everything had to be just right. If even a single fork was out of place, she saw it, and would quickly move to set it right. This was going to be her sister's first real birthday, the first one that they could celebrate together after being separated for so many years, and she wanted everything to be perfect. She'd spent weeks planning everything that was within her power to make sure nothing went wrong today.

"Relax!" a voice suddenly called out, "Everything looks great!"

Elsa whirled around, a slight blush coming to her cheeks at having been caught fussing over the party decorations so obsessively. She was even more embarrassed, and more than a little surprised, when she saw who it was that had caught her red-handed.

"Kristoff!" she gasped, "I didn't know you were getting back today."

The blonde mountain man shrugged and crossed his arms smugly, grinning ear to ear. His dark blue shirt was crumpled, the sleeves rolled up at the elbows, and he was still wearing his dark, fur lined trousers and pointed boots. She wondered for a moment if he had just gotten back from his trip into the mountains.

As always, his trusted reindeer companion was with him. As soon as he saw her, Sven eagerly came trotting over and nudged her shoulder with

his snout. Elsa giggled.

"It's good to see you too, Sven."

The reindeer began sniffing her hands expectantly.

"No no no. Sorry boy, I don't have any carrots on me right now."

Sven groaned disappointedly, and Elsa was convinced she saw the reindeer roll his eyes before he trotted back towards Kristoff and began nudging the mountain man's satchel

"Hey, don't come whining to me." he muttered indignantly, snatching the bag away from the prying reindeer, "I don't have any carrots either. You already ate them all."

Elsa laughed when the reindeer flopped down on his rear and glared at the two of them.

"I thought you two weren't going to get back for another week at least."

"Are you kidding me? I wouldn't miss this for the world." Kristoff chuckled, "Besides, someone has to be here to make sure you don't lose your mind fussing over everything."

Elsa scoffed and gave him a playful shove.

"I just want everything to be perfect." she explained defensively. "And as long as you're here, I don't suppose you'd mind hanging up that horrendous banner you were so insistent on putting up."

Before he left, Kristoff had made a banner to hang up for Anna's birthday. Elsa likened the craftsmanship to that of a four year old. The letters were smeared and paint was splattered all over the paper.

Kristoff was indignant. "Hey! Painting isn't exactly my forte. Besides, I was leaving that morning. I was in a hurry."

Elsa smirked and placed her hands on her hip. "No one forced you to go on anywhere. You know, you don't exactly have to sell ice to support yourself anymore."

"Oh yeahâ€¦wellâ€¦" Kristoff rubbed the back of his neck nervously. Elsa's smirk slowly turned into a triumphant grin. She knew he was backed in to a corner on that one.

"Okay, okayâ€¦" he relented, "You're right, I'm sorry. The trip could have waited another two weeks."

Elsa chuckled, patting him on the shoulder in a teasing consoling manner. "That's okay. The important thing is that you're here. Now, the monstrosity is laid out over there, the stepladder is by the door, and the two pillars I want you to hang it from are on either side of the main table. Get to it."

Kristoff laughed and executed an over exaggerated bow in her direction. "Yes ma'am." he quipped cheerfully before moving to start

his task.

"Oh, by the way!" he stopped and turned back to her, "That thing you wanted me to make for you, it's finished. It's in the bed of my wagon when you want to go get it."

"Thanks, Kristoff. I really appreciate it."

Kristoff nodded, his grin widening. "No problem."

"Yeah, I know, you're very humble, now hurry and get that banner up." Elsa urged frantically, quickly shooing him away. "Anna's getting ready and will be coming down soon, and I want everything ready before she does."

"Alright, alright, I'm going."

While Kristoff was busy hanging the banner, Elsa went back to inspecting the courtyard. There wasn't much else that needed to be done. The tables were set, the proper number of plates and silverware laid out, and the decorations were hung up around the perimeter of the courtyard. But she was so anxious, she felt she needed something to do with her hands to keep her mind occupied. She wanted, no, she needed everything to go just right today. She owed her sister that much.

While she walked amongst the tables, something out of the corner of her eyes caught her attention. Several of the castle staff came out of the castle carrying platters of food and set them on the tables. A couple of them had moved her sister's birthday cake and set it in the shade so it did not melt in the warm sunlight, but that was not what caught her attention. Rather instead, it was the small snowman that was standing on a chair in front of it, its back turned to her. Elsa gasped.

"Olaf! What are you doing!?"

Olaf whipped around, the two twigs that served as arms coming up in an attempt to cover the blue frosting around his mouth.

"I'm not eating cake!" he mumbled innocently.

Elsa sighed, though she couldn't help but smile when several crumbs fell off his face. "Olaf." She started in a gently reprimanding tone, walking towards him.

"But it's an ice-cream cake!" Olaf protested as Elsa knelt down so she was eyelevel with him.

"And it's for Anna." She reminded him gently.

"And it's for Anna!" he repeated, lowering his eyes apologetically. Elsa turned away and began to walk back towards Kristoff. Behind her back, Olaf spat out the hunk of ice-cream in his mouth and plopped it back on the cake.

"Alright, that's that done." Kristoff proclaimed cheerfully, sliding down the ladder and examining his handiwork proudly. Elsa walked up beside him and glanced up at the long banner. Seventeen sheets of white paper were strung along a length of string, each one bearing a

large, splattered letter in a different color. Collectively, they spelled out 'Happy Birthday Anna'.

Well, it was the thought that counts.

Suddenly, a clock bell chimed in the distance, and Elsa gasped.

"Oh, it's time!" she exclaimed.

"It's time!" Olaf repeated excitedly, hopping off the chair, "For what?"

Elsa giggled, struggling to control her barely suppressed excitement. "Okay, umâ€¦ Kristoff, I need you hide."

Kristoff looked at her as though she had lost her mind.

"Wait, what? Why?"

Elsa looked at him pleadingly and frantically began to shoo him away.

"Anna doesn't know you're here yet, and I want to surprise her." She quickly explained, firmly pushing on his shoulder, "Now go on. Go, go, quickly!"

"Alright, alright, I'm going." Kristoff laughed, hurrying off. Sven quickly trotted off after him, and the two disappeared through a side door that led out of the courtyard.

Once Kristoff had gone, Elsa turned her attention back to the courtyard, doing once final check to make sure everything was in place before they opened the gates.

"Your Majesty!"

She turned and saw a guard approaching her, the black and purple insignia bearing the Arendelle crocus on his shoulder indicating that he was a member of the Royal Guard. He was young, probably no more than twenty years of age, yet his dark blue eyes showed a man with experience far beyond his years. His mane of auburn brown hair hung smartly over his brow, angular chin covered in a light dusting of stubble. Elsa frowned as she tried to recall his name. There weren't many assigned to her personal guard, and she knew most of them by name. Was it Mark? No, Mathew. That was his name.

"Your Majesty, the guests have begun to arrive and are waiting outside. Should we open the gates now?"

Elsa's eyes scanned the courtyard one last time. The castle servants were just now carrying out the last platters of food, and a dozen or so other members of the Royal Guard had taken up positions around the perimeter of the courtyard to keep watch over the proceedings. Everything was set.

"Yes." Elsa answered, barely managing to keep her composure through her growing excitement, "Open the gates."

Mathew bowed his head.

"Yes, Your Majesty."

Waving his hand, he signaled to the two guards standing on either side of the massive gates.

"Open the gates!"

Immediately, the two guards grasped the round iron handles and heaved on the heavy oak doors, slowly pulling them open and allowing the people already gathered outside to enter.

Elsa stood to the side and greeted everyone that entered. Servants came out of the castle and began to serve food to those that immediately took their seats at the tables, or stood to the side waiting for their services to be called upon. A small wooden stage had been constructed beside the wall near the palace doors. A group of musicians took their places on the low platform and band began to play a slow, gentle melody.

Traditionally, birthday celebrations for a member of Arendelle's royal family were private events and thus not open to the public. They were usually held within the castle and attended only by members of the family and a select few dignitaries from foreign countries, but Elsa felt that after everything that had happened a month before, a festivity of some sort was in order. And what better way to bring the people of Arendelle together than to celebrate the birthday of their beloved princess.

The people hummed about, chatting and laughing amongst themselves. It had been a prosperous year in Arendelle. Despite the terrible winter that had cursed their land a month before, the harvests were more bountiful than they had ever been. Trade with neighboring countries was flourishing in spite of the repealed trade agreement with Weselton. Spices, furs, and other valued commodities flowed in and out of their harbor, bringing much wealth to the people of Arendelle.

Elsa was shaken from her thoughts when the castle doors suddenly opened, and she smiled when she saw Anna stepping out into the courtyard for the first time that morning. Her sister looked absolutely stunning in the dress that she had given her, her hair drawn back in a bun on the back of her head and tied with three differently colored ribbons. She chuckled softly at the look of amazement on her sister's face, and openly laughed at the bright red tone that flushed her face when the people began clapping and singing 'happy birthday' to her.

Anna's eyes scanned the courtyard until they finally found her sister, and quickly she began to make her way over to her, weaving amongst the chatting guests until she finally reached her.

"This is amazing, Elsa!" she cried, throwing her arms around her sister and squeezing her tightly, "I can't believe you did all this for me!"

Elsa smiled as she wrapped her arms around her sister, holding her close. She had spent far too many years separated from her sister, and she regretted all the birthdays that she had missed more than anything in the world, but now that they were together again she could make up for each and every one of them.

"Why wouldn't I?" she chuckled, stepping back and holding her sister at arm's length, "This is your perfect day, and I want you to enjoy every moment of it."

Anna beamed, her crystal blue eyes practically glowing with sheer joy and excitement. But then her face suddenly fell, and she huffed in annoyance.

"I wish Kristoff was here." she muttered irritably, "I don't know why he had to go traipsing off into the mountains just two weeks before my birthday. Couldn't he have waited until after? I mean, it's not like he has to sell ice to support himself anymore, right?"

As casually as she could, Elsa brought her hand up to her mouth to cover the smile that was irresistibly tugging at the corner of her lips.

"Ice is his life." she giggled, glancing over her sister's shoulder and casually nodding her head.

"I know!" Anna exclaimed exasperatedly, not noticing the subtle movement her sister made, "He's always saying that. What's so great about ice? It's just ice! I mean, no offense to you or anything cause the stuff you make is amazing and everything, but still, it's just frozen water!"

"You're absolutely right, Anna." Elsa agreed, her smile getting bigger by the moment.

Anna paused in the middle of her tirade and glanced at her suspiciously.

"You okay, Elsa? You're acting a little funny."

"N-no, everything's fine." Elsa stammered, "Turn around."

"Wait, what? Why?"

"Just turn around and look behind you."

Slowly, Anna turned around, all the while glancing at her sister as though she had lost her mind.

"Okayâ€¦ I'm not sure why Iâ€¦"

She trailed off when she saw who was standing behind her.

"Kristoff..?"

The blonde mountain man smirked mischievously.

"Happy birthday."

Anna quickly got over her surprise, and with a delighted cry leaped into his arms, nearly knocking the mountain man over.

"Oh my gosh! I can't believe you're here!"

Kristoff chuckled, hugging her around the waist and gently placing her on the ground, "You didn't really think I'd miss your party, did you?"

"No!" Anna mumbled sheepishly, "At least, not on purpose."

"Well, I'm here now, just like I promised I would."

As if on cue, the band began to play a bouncy tune, and the crowd of partygoers parted as many among them separated into pairs and began dancing to the joyful music. Anna's eyes suddenly lit up with excitement, a sly grin appearing on her mischievous face. Grabbing Kristoff by the hand, she began dragging him towards the dancing couples.

"Come dance with me!"

Elsa had to cover her mouth to stop herself from laughing. The expression on Kristoff's face as he was dragged towards the dance floor was more akin to that of a cat being dragged to water.

"I don't dance, Anna." he protested weakly. Glancing back, he looked at her pleadingly, "A little help here, Elsa."

Elsa shook her head. "You're on your own for this one, Kristoff."

Anna finally managed to drag him on to the dance floor, gently guiding his hands so that they were resting on her hips. Slowly, the two began to sway back and forth, keeping in time with the beat of the music. Kristoff kept his eyes glued to his feet as they danced, his steps slow and awkward as he tried his best not to step on the hem of Anna's dress.

In other words, he was performing miserably, but Anna didn't seem to mind. She was smiling more widely than Elsa had ever seen her before, eyes practically glowing with happiness. Gently, she tilted his chin up, staring into his eyes with a dreamy look on her face.

Elsa smiled as she watched the young couple dance. She was happy for her sister. She had found someone loved her for who she really was, someone who was willing to put her before himself in every way. Underneath that gruff exterior, Kristoff was really a kind man at heart, and the most selfless person she had ever met. When he had come to her a month before, asking her permission to court her sister, she couldn't think of a single objection to his request, or a better man on whom she could rely to watch over and protect Anna.

It suddenly hit her that her sister wasn't that little girl she had played with all those years ago anymore. She had grown up into a fine young woman who no longer needed her big sister to watch over her. An overwhelming feeling of loneliness crept over her, as though watching her sister dancing happily with the man she loved made her realize that there was something missing in her own life.

End
file.